

PUBLIC ACCESS

Goal

Public Access. Maintain, enhance, or provide adequate access to public land and resources.

Management Guidelines

A. Retain Access. Access sites and corridors should be retained in public ownership and improved and maintained when feasible. Where practical and within limits of available funding, full public rights of access should be provided when roads are constructed by state and local governments. Existing public access to mineralized areas, recreation, fish, wildlife, forest, and other public resources should be maintained or improved when an access route is constructed for resource development purposes. The potential for causing increased demand for limited resources and for causing increased user conflicts, including subsistence use, should be considered when determining if existing access should be improved.

B. Reserve Rights of Access. Rights of access should be reserved by the state when state land is sold or leased.

C. Acquire Access. Perpetual exclusive easements should be acquired and recorded when the state acquires access rights across property in other ownerships. Public appropriations for the purchase of access sites, easements or reservations providing access to public use areas and to proposed settlement property may be requested by DNR.

D. Establish and Maintain Easements. Generally, section line easements should not be vacated unless there is some overriding reason to vacate them, and alternative, physically usable access can be established.

E. Assert Rights-of-Way. No potential RS2477 rights-of-way have been identified for validation by DNR at this time to implement this plan.

F. Management of 17(b) Easements. Generally, DNR will not accept management of 17(b) easements unless the trail or easement is already partly under state management, or state management of the easement will best protect public access to state lands.

G. Coordination With the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF). Specific access requirements, such as widths of rights-of-way or locations of roads, should be coordinated with DOT&PF.

H. Managing Access. Access to public lands may be managed at certain times and in certain places to protect public safety, to allow special uses, and to prevent harm to wildlife resources, the environment, or other natural resources. Examples of situations when limitations of public access may be justified include during fire suppression, during timber harvest, during development of oil and gas facilities, and during periods of high soil moisture when vehicle traffic may cause extensive damage to roads and trails.

I. Provide Access from Staging Areas. Access corridors should be established and maintained from lakes, stream sections, seacoast areas, and land areas which have the potential to serve, year-round or seasonally, as important points of aircraft or watercraft access from which overland access can be staged to resource-use and settlement areas.

J. Community Notice. See *Coordination and Public Notice*, Guideline C, page 2-5 for public notice requirements when reviewing requests for rights-of-way authorizations.

K. Provision of Access Within Land Sale Areas. See *Settlement* Guideline D-3, page 2-31.

L. Other Guidelines Affecting Public Access.

Several other guidelines may affect public access.

See the following sections of this chapter:

- Coordination and public notice
- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Forestry
- Grazing
- Heritage resources
- Lakeshore management
- Materials
- Public and commercial recreation
- Settlement
- Stream corridors and instream flow
- Subsistence activities and traditional uses
- Subsurface resources
- Trail management
- Transportation and utilities
- Wetlands management